

Garden City, on 29 July 2000 (grid reference TL 2816). However, it was a new site in an under-recorded area of the county and Rob managed to persuade me that the number of suitable lamping nights this year had been so low that this one was an opportunity not to be missed!

Our effort was rewarded with the capture of a single, apparently freshly-emerged, male example of a *Dioryctria*, which I considered most likely to be *D. schuetzeella*. I set the specimen, but then, as always when there is something interesting to do, work got in the way of pleasure. It was not until I received the note above from Alasdair Aston recording *schuetzeella* in North Hampshire, that I contrived to make time to critically examine the Hertfordshire moth and thus confirmed that it is indeed *D. schuetzeella*. This constitutes the first record of the species for Hertfordshire, and brings the county moth total to 1458 species. The larval foodplant (*Picea abies*) dominates sections of Bramfield Woods and the moth must surely be breeding there.

Also of interest during the same session was the arrival at the sheet of several examples of the tortricoid moth *Piniphila bifasciana* (Haw.). This is a pine-feeding species that is evidently quite local in its distribution. The only other Hertfordshire record available would appear to be one made at Hitchin in 1934 and included by Foster in his 1937 county list (Foster, A. H., 1937. *Trans. Herts. Nat. Hist. Soc.* **20** (4):157-280).— COLIN W. PLANT, 14 West Road, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 3QP (E-mail: Colinwplant@compuserve.com).

Delayed Emergence of Puss Moth *Cerura vinula* (L) (Lep.: Notodontidae)

In summer 1998, whilst sweep netting in East Field, Monks Wood NNR, I caught a large green caterpillar, which I assumed was that of a Puss Moth or related species. I reared it, in a plastic box, on Aspen *Populus tremula* and willow *Salix* species. It pupated on a piece of branch that I had put in the box with it, spinning an almost invisible cocoon, as described in various text books.

In 1999 I expected it to emerge, and inspected the box on a regular basis. At the end of the summer I assumed that the creature had died, perhaps having found life in a plastic box on top of a bookcase in my bedroom too unnatural.

On 2 June 2000, soon after I switched out my bedroom light, I was roused by a noise, which I soon traced to the plastic box. To my surprise, the moth had emerged, and was fluttering its wings. Its identity as a Puss Moth was later confirmed by my colleague Nick Greatorex-Davies, and the specimen was released in Monks Wood close to where the larva had been captured.

This moth had spent at least twenty-one months in the pupal stage. Such a long period does not appear to have been recorded in this species before, though it has been reported for the related Poplar Kitten *Furcula bifida* (Heath, J. and Emmet, A.M., 1979. *The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland*. **9**. Curwen).

Incidentally, this moth only survived through my lack of tidiness! I thought several times about disposing of the contents of the box on the fire, but never got round to it. Just as well, and a lesson to us all – never throw anything away!— HENRY R. ARNOLD, Windyridge, Shillow Hill, Bury, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire.